

Senator Steve Daines
Joint Select Committee on Budget Appropriations
Process Reform Member Day
June 27, 2018

Co-Chairs Womack and Lowey, thank you for your leadership and convening this Members' Day giving us an opportunity to share our experiences on how to improve the budget and appropriations process

Many of the members currently serving in Congress come from business backgrounds and can offer some experiences on how to make the appropriations process work better and therefore more responsibly for the Taxpayer.

And let me tell you something you already know — our budget process is broken.

So it should be no surprise that a profoundly broken process creates bad result.

Having spent 28 years in the private sector – passing a balanced budget is not optional

Yet in Congress – apparently it is

Since the passage of the Congressional Budget Act in 1974, this broken process has not been fixed

And with over \$21.1 trillion debt which will reach 33.8 trillion in 10 years Congress has no option but to change the budget and appropriations process

Protecting hardworking taxpayers dollars, while making officials accountable for delivering results should be common sense.

We can and should do better

I want to take this opportunity to share with you a few ideas that I believe would really impact the way we budget.

1. Combine Authorizing with the corresponding appropriations committee and completely dissolve the budget committee – by doing this we can start having real conversations about where to spend and how to spend. Currently, we have two processes on different tracks that simply just don't sync up. Integrating the processes into one committee will ensure more coordination and better outcomes. This will allow, most importantly, to take on our greatest cost, entitlements. Reforming entitlements is necessary to balance the budget but also to save and strengthen these programs for future generations

2. The budget should be enforceable by law – we need to have an up or down vote on the entirety of the budget so that folks are held accountable

3. Biannual budgeting – As a sub committee chair on appropriations I believe that by budgeting over a longer period of two-years, we can make the process and outcomes more predictable for all stakeholders.

4. Finally, we need to create incentives. For example an idea that I think would be worth considering - No budget, no pay. It's simple, we don't pass a balanced budget, we don't get paid. I believe that by passing no budget, no pay members of Congress will clearly understand the consequences of continual deficit spending. There are 46 out of 50 states require a balanced budget. If 46 states can do it, so can we.

The gridlock we are experiencing highlights why we need budget reform now

I believe that finally moving on some of these ideas we, together can work towards having a balanced budget which means getting our fiscal house in order

The American taxpayer deserves it

We need to ensure that we are acting in a responsible manner for our kids and their kids

Thank you for holding this session today and allowing me to share